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U.S. Rep. Mark Kirk, R-10th, returned home today after completing a reserve tour of duty in Kandahar, Afghanistan. The deployment is the first time a U.S. Representative-reservist has deployed to an imminent danger area since World War II, according to his office.

"It was an honor to serve with uniformed Americans in Afghanistan that I admire," he said in a statement. "I learned a great deal about the challenges Americans and our NATO allies face in central Asia. President-elect Obama and our NATO allies are preparing to renew a commitment to success in Afghanistan. I return to Congress dedicated to the men and women of our Armed Forces and will work to ensure they have the support needed to carry out their mission."

Kirk, a Navy reservist, served as a special advisor for counter-narcotics in NATO's International Security Assistance Force Regional Command (South), located at Kandahar airfield, according to his statement.

During his deployment, he went on several missions to Zabol and Helmand provinces to assess the prospects for reducing the production of heroin next year. Afghanistan is the source for more than 90 percent of the world's supply of opium and heroin, he stated.

Last month, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff announced that NATO allies would be increasing their commitment to security in southern Afghanistan.

He and Col. Lindsay Graham, a Republican senator from South Carolina, are the only members of Congress to have served in Afghanistan.

This article was edited to comply with Franking Commission guidelines.